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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ANKARA 001928

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL MOPS CY IZ TU

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR THE APRIL 2004 VISIT OF GENERAL JUMPER, CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

(U) Classified by Ambassador Eric S. Edelman; Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Your visit to Turkey comes at a time when the US-TU relationship is generally on the mend. It has been more than a year since the 1 March vote and 6 months since the 7 October vote and the "soft landing". Once again, generally, the US-TU relationship is best approached from a multi-faceted perspective, not just a one-issue relationship-Iraq. This is a particularly dynamic period for Turkey as it is dealing with several high stakes issues: Cyprus, EU Accession, Istanbul Summit, and just-completed local elections. Further, Turkey is also dealing with a range of other important issues: Iraq: PKK & the TAL, GME, Med Dialogue and enhanced NATO engagement in the region, the Global Posture Review, and Afghanistan. End Summary.

Current Events

¶2. (C) Your visit comes on the heels of Turkish DCHOD General Basbug's March counterpart visit to the United States. General Basbug's meetings were characterized by candid and sometimes difficult discussions. Basbug expressed Turkish frustration and disappointment at a lack of US progress towards dealing with the PKK-Kadek and contended the US needed to demonstrate its resolve and take tangible action. On Iraq, Basbug noted Turkish concerns about the TAL, the transfer of authority in June, Iraqi territorial integrity, rights of the Turkomen, and keeping TU Special Forces in Iraq until the PKK/KADEK threat is removed, even if that is after July.

¶3. (C) Your visit also follows the 29 March meetings between MG Jeff Kohler (EUCOM J-5), MG Arslan (Strategy, TGS J-5), and MG Kalyoncu (Deputy, TGS J-3). They discussed a variety of topics, focusing primarily on the Caucasus. The general atmosphere was that the Caucasus Working Group has been revitalized and is performing well. Other initiatives, like the Caucasus Clearinghouse, bilateral training, support, and Caspian Guard are viewed by both the US and TU as adding to regional stability.

¶4. (C) Additionally, one week prior to your arrival, Turkey held nation-wide municipal elections. Prime Minister Erdogan's AK Party, as expected, made further gains. This was the first major election since the AK Party came to power in 2002. With a larger vote total, the AK Party will likely be held to a higher standard; they will be held responsible for issues across the spectrum in Turkey. The AK Party will have more authority, but more responsibility as well.

Greater Middle East Initiative (GME)

¶5. (C) Turkey wants to know what GME means in the region and what the US is looking for from Turkey in the way of support/assistance; how do we intend to work this with countries of the region and NATO. GME has been the subject of considerable press commentary in Turkey. It has been mostly negative and reflecting chronic suspicions about U.S. motives and paranoia that the U.S.'s real aim is to turn GME against Turkey and remove the Kemalist State structure. Recently, however the basics of the GME Initiative appear to be gaining somewhat greater acceptance among Turkish Officials as more information and details are presented. One official noted he thought most people in the region would support it if it were presented in a clear and concise manner. He also pointed out that the US needed to make more efforts to explain the initiative to win over world public opinion. Turkish officials have been careful in underscoring the need to avoid characterizing Turkey as a Muslim or Islamic state (which it is not), instead of as a secular democracy with a predominantly moderate Muslim population that it is.

CYPRUS

16. (C) TGS is being careful not to comment in public on the course of Cyprus negotiations. TGS only cautiously agreed to the government's wish to move Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash and the Turkish Cypriots back to the bargaining table and it appears TGS insisted on a number of red lines. However, TGS remains concerned lest a settlement (1) draw a line between the two communities which TGS considers militarily indefensible; (2) lead to a reduction of Turkish troops below 6,000 prior to Turkey's EU entry; and (3) impose what TGS considers onerous reporting requirements for troop movements. We continue to emphasize (1) the credit redounding to Turkey broadly (not just the government) from its initiative to re-open negotiations; (2) the crucial importance to Turkey's success overall (well beyond the question of a start date for EU accession negotiations) of a settlement in Cyprus; and (3) the importance of Turkey's maintaining its constructive, common sense, cool-handed line in the negotiations, i.e., to avoid being provoked by the Greek Cypriots into abandoning the negotiations.

EU Accession

17. (C) Turkey's current focus on EU accession has been a ready vehicle for the internal changes Turkey needs to be successful. Although the Copenhagen Criteria are a de facto external discipline, there is widespread sentiment that these are things Turkey needs to do for its own good.

18. (C) Turkey's success is not a given. The Turks have done well in passing laws, but now need to implement them, as well as to adopt additional legislative reforms. Everyday life across Turkey yields examples where the basic elements of individual rights and rule of law are not respected. Turkey's EU supporters' stress that complacency now will jeopardize Turkey's chances of getting a date to begin accession negotiations in December. Even if Turkey does begin accession talks, the road will be arduous and could take 6-10 years. Faced with a long haul, the current political focus and burst of energy for reforms could fail.

19. (C) The Turkish economy has improved significantly over the past year, greatly reducing fears of renewed financial crisis and generating hope for sustained, low-inflation growth. However, this improvement has generated complacency among government leaders, who fail to understand that the economy's huge debt and structural weaknesses leave it vulnerable. Unless Turkey implements reforms systematically, it will miss the opportunity to move toward sustainable prosperity and away from the boom-and-bust cycles that have haunted it.

Istanbul Summit

10. (C) The President is scheduled for a bilateral visit immediately prior to the NATO Summit June 27-29. NRF has been recommended as a good option to augment civilian security forces if needed. As Turkey would provide the preponderance of the ground troops, TU would be in the forefront. The US is encouraging Turkey to present any requests for additional security assistance through NATO, but so far there has only been a formal request to NATO for AWACS support.

11. (C) The image of the Summit's occurring in Istanbul provides an opportunity to showcase Turkey and its role in both the institutions of Europe and the GME initiative. Turkey's geographic and historic role as a bridge between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East will provide an appropriate backdrop to the Summit's emphasis on GME, Med Dialogue, expanding Pfp opportunities with the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey's active support for these initiatives would further underscore the important role Turkey plays in NATO and its neighboring regions.

IRAQ

¶12. (C) PKK/KADEK/KONGRA-GEL: Turkey is anxious for action to be taken against the PKK/KADEK/KONGRA-GEL. Basbug and others have expressed continued frustration at a perceived US lack of action against the PKK. In general, many in TGS have felt Turkey has provided the US with a range of information for use in combating the PKK/KADEK/KONGRA-GEL and have seen little in return. Some in TGS see the need for a well-thought-out comprehensive plan to eliminate the PKK/KADEK/KONGRA-GEL. They also realize this is a long-term and laborious effort. However, many within Turkey, and especially within the TGS, see a real need for immediate tangible action as a counter to the public/media.

¶13. (C) Transitional Administrative Law (TAL): GOT reacted harshly to the terms of the TAL. It views the process of its development as undemocratic; the result as dividing Iraq into a pure ethnic federation; and the treatment of the Turkomen as belittling. The result, it believes is inconsistent with the presentation to date by the U.S. including in the recent letter from the President to PM Erdogan. Turkey believes it has been frozen out of US Iraq operations and treated in a manner unbecoming an ally. It is not yet clear how far our explanations of the process so far and in perspective have gone to put aside those concerns, but the number of complaints about the TAL have diminished.

Afghanistan

¶14. (C) Afghan Coordinator Taylor held wide-ranging and candid consultations with MFA and TGS officials in Ankara on March 12. Turkish officials stressed the theme of "Afghanistan for Afghans" throughout the talks, arguing their commitment to stabilization and reconstruction efforts there are not motivated by a desire to support one ethnic group over another. They reiterated their interest in establishing a PRT in northern Afghanistan and are waiting for SHAPE to respond formally to their proposal. MFA officials exhibited varying degrees of flexibility on location and reluctantly accepted the importance of having SHAPE and the Afghan government coordinate in the overall PRT decision-making process. The Turks also reiterated their interest in increasing their contributions to ANA and police training, but hinted that such steps would likely be predicated on establishing a PRT. The Turks likewise intend to move ahead (independent of the PRT decision) with plans to deepen their involvement in education, medical and agriculture reconstruction projects in the north, while making clear that a PRT would greatly facilitate such efforts.

Incirlik AFB

¶15. (C) The Turks are still awaiting a second round of consultations on global force posture. TGS has heard rumblings about different potential operational needs or developments. In fact, during the TU DCHOD's recent visit, Gen. Pace informally mentioned the possible F-16 move and noted further additional discussions with Turkey would take place if Turkey was the preferred option. None of these issues have been taken to the political leadership at this point and it would not be useful to get the TGS significantly out in front in trying to obtain continuous changes to approved operations. The authority for OIF II concludes on April 30, and there has been no sustained engagement with the GOT/TGS on other operational requirements. Of note, the resolution authorizing the deployment and employment of US tankers at Incirlik and the OIF troop rotation expires in June 04. Ambassador Edelman strongly believes DoD should perform a comprehensive review of the potential desired uses for Incirlik before approaching the GOT. The USG could present the total concept and carry out only one set of potentially protracted negotiations, vice the numerous sets of negotiations we are to bring our request to the Turks piecemeal. Turkish interpretations of our general arrangements form a relatively high political bar for establishing different operational requirements at Incirlik.

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